A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL

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by

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A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL

An abstract of a Dissertation by
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The problem. Research indicates that discipline is the biggest problem facing public schools. Surveys indicate that the public, school administrators, and teachers feel that more needs to be done to resolve this serious issue. This study was designed to provide a self-contained classroom, for a small number of sixth grade students who were exhibiting problem behaviors at school, where time would be available to talk about problems and work on solutions.

Procedures. The students for the treatment group were subjectively selected on the basis of problem behaviors each of them had exhibited during their fifth grade year. Students deemed not to have exhibited problem behaviors were selected for a comparison group using a matched-pairs technique. The treatment group spent time each day talking about problem behaviors they were having, how to deal with them, and working with affective materials.

Findings. The treatment group showed significant negative growth in attitude toward school, and significant growth in reducing overt problem behavior and academic achievement. The comparison group showed no significant growth in attitude toward school and overt problem behavior, and significant growth in academic achievement. A comparison of attitude toward school gain scores to overt problem behavior gain scores and academic achievement gain scores for both groups showed no significant correlation in any instance.

Conclusions. Based on this study there is no apparent advantage in working on attitude toward school for reducing the number of overt problem behaviors at school, improving academic achievement, or improving attitude toward school. This study supports the findings in the literature of no significant correlation between attitude and behavior, and attitude toward school and academic achievement.

Recommendations. If similar studies are to be done in the future an objective criterion check list should be developed and applied to an entire population in the year prior to the study to identify students with overt problem behaviors, and the treatment and comparison groups should be organized in the same type of classrooms taught by teachers trained to use the same methods and materials.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The topic of classroom discipline has received considerable attention during the last decade. Numerous public opinion polls rank discipline as the biggest problem facing the public schools. Twelve of thirteen Gallup polls have reported that Americans view discipline as the most important problem in the schools.[1] Public school administrators concur in this evaluation. In a recent survey, school administrators identified discipline as their top concern and stated that more needed to be done to resolve

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[1]Stanley Elam, ed., The Gallup Polls of Attitudes Toward Education 1969-1973 (Bloomington: Phi Delta Kappa, Inc., 1973), pp. 13, 56, 84, 120, 152; George H. Gallup, "Sixth Annual Gallup Poll of Public Attitudes Toward Education," Phi Delta Kappan, LVI, No. 1 (1974), 21; George H. Gallup, "Seventh Annual Gallup Poll of Public Attitudes Toward Education," Phi Delta Kappan, LVII, No. 4 (1975), 228; George H. Gallup, "Eighth Annual Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools," Phi Delta Kappan, LVIII, No. 2 (1976), 188; George H. Gallup, "Ninth Annual Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools," Phi Delta Kappan, LIX, No. 1 (1977), 34; George H. Gallup, "The 10th Annual Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools," Phi Delta Kappan, LX, No. 1 (1978), 34, 36; George H. Gallup, "The Eleventh Annual Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools," Phi Delta Kappan, LXI, No. 1 (1979), 34; George H. Gallup, "The 12th Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools," Phi Delta Kappan, LXII, No. 1 (1980), 34; George H. Gallup, "The 13th Annual Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools," Phi Delta Kappan, LXIII, No. 1 (1981), 34.

this serious issue.[1] Teachers have also become increasingly concerned about student behavior in the classroom. "The rapid increase in the number of books, learning packets, and courses on the topic of classroom discipline attests to the fact that teachers are searching for solutions to what they view as a critical factor in their professional lives."[2]

Statement of the Problem

What the teacher does with any behavior-changing process is probably the most important factor in the development of student attitude toward school. A way needs to be found that will simplify the behavior change process and thus help to assure a better attitude toward school which in turn might result in higher achievement.

The specific problem of this study was to determine if eleven sixth-grade boys who manifested negative behaviors would, when placed in a self-contained classroom, improve their attitude toward school and improve their academic achievement after treatment to improve their negative behaviors.

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[1]Daniel L. Duke, "How Administrators View the Crisis in School Discipline," Phi Delta Kappan, LIX, No. 5 (1978), 328.

[2]Vernon F. Jones and Louise S. Jones, Responsible Classroom Discipline (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1981), p. 3.

Purpose of the Study

The search must continue to find methods or approaches for use with elementary students to improve their attitude toward school and in turn change behavior. The purpose of this study was to see whether, after treatment, students would show significant changes in their attitude toward school, their behavior at school, and in their academic achievement. The study also attempted to determine if any correlation existed between attitude toward school and overt problem behavior at school, and between attitude toward school and academic achievement.

Hypotheses

If for one year, a treatment group of selected sixth grade students are provided instruction in a self-contained classroom which allows an average of forty-five minutes per day for discussion of their beliefs, attitudes and values as these areas relate to the behavior problems they were having; and a matched comparison group of students are taught in a departmental program where no such provisions have been made:

Attitude Toward School

1. Treatment group will not differ from September to May
2. Comparison group will not differ from September to May
3. Treatment group and comparison group will not differ in September
4. Treatment group and comparison group will not differ in May
5. Treatment group gain score and comparison group gain score will not differ

Overt Behavior

1. Treatment group will not differ from September to May
2. Comparison group will not differ from September to May
3. Treatment group and comparison group will not differ in September
4. Treatment group and comparison group will not differ in May
5. Treatment group gain score and comparison group gain score will not differ

Academic Achievement

1. Treatment group will not differ from September to May
2. Comparison group will not differ from September to May
3. Treatment group and comparison group will not differ in September
4. Treatment group and comparison group will not differ in May
5. Treatment group gain score and comparison group gain score will not differ

Overt Behavior and Attitude Toward School

1. Treatment group gain scores do not correlate
2. Comparison group gain scores do not correlate

Academic Achievement and Attitude Toward School

1. Treatment group gain scores do not correlate
2. Comparison group gain scores do not correlate

Procedures

The students for the treatment group were selected subjectively on the basis of behavior problems each of them had had during their fifth grade year. The fifth grade teachers were asked to identify problem students on the following criteria: came to school late, did not take part in class activity, did not complete assignment, did not do work when given time in class, moved about classroom without reason, disrupted class activity, disrupted study time, was argumentative, talked back to the teacher, fought in the hall, fought in the classroom, was sent in from the playground for fighting, was sent in from the playground for talking back to the playground aide, was sent out of the classroom as a form of discipline, and was sent to the principal as a form of discipline. During their sixth grade year these students were taught in a self-contained classroom setting which provided activities designed to help them overcome their problem behaviors.

A comparison group was developed using matched pairs. The criteria upon which the matching was made were: sex, age, grade, attendance at the same elementary school, and Iowa Test of Basic Skills scores. The comparison group was not matched with the treatment group on the criteria of overt problem behavior. The students in the comparison group were taught in a three teacher departmentalized program.

The students in the treatment group and the comparison group were given the School Attitude Test to determine their attitude toward their school environment and their educational experiences.[1] The School Attitude Test was administered by the homeroom teachers in September and again in May. The students in the treatment group and the comparison group were given the Peabody Individual Achievement Test, a wide-range instrument designed to survey their level of educational attainment in basic skills and knowledge. The Peabody Individual Achievement Tests were administered in September and again in May by two resource teachers who had experience giving individualized tests. It was common for these resource teachers to test individual students.

The information on overt behavior problems was not collected until after the students for the self-contained classroom had been identified. To obtain a record of overt problem behaviors for students in the treatment group and the comparison group during their fifth grade year, the fifth grade teachers were asked in August to recount from memory, the frequency of each occurance of behavior used in the identification process of the treatment group. To aid the teachers in this procedure, forms were provided for each student which listed each criterion with a rating scale. (See Appendix.) The rating scale was as follows: (1) Daily,

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[1]The School Attitude Test was developed by Earl McCallon, Ph.D. and published by Learning Concepts of Austin, Texas, 1973.

(2) Weekly, (3) Biweekly, (4) Monthly, (5) Two to three times during the year, and (6) Not at all. During the sixth grade year the teacher of the treatment group and the teachers of the comparison group used the same forms with the rating scale removed. (See Appendix.) It was replaced with a blank space that was to be used to record the behavior or punishment each time it happened. The self-contained classroom teacher and the departmentalized homeroom teachers received a new form each quarter for each of the treatment group students or comparison group students they had in their room.

Importance of the Study

There have been many attempts to improve student behavior. Teachers often feel that classes are too large to effectively take care of behavior problems. Glass and Smith found that, "Reducing class size has beneficial effects both on cognitive and affective outcomes . . ."[1]

If a classroom is significantly smaller, the teacher will have more time to concentrate on individual needs. It seemed reasonable to attempt to determine if the additional attention given to students in a small self-contained classroom would produce attitude change toward school

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[1]Mary Lee Smith and Gene V. Glass, Relationship of Class-Size to Classroom Processes, Teacher Satisfaction and Pupil Affect: A Meta-Analysis (San Francisco: Far West Laboratory, 1979), p. ii.

with a concomitant change in academic achievement. This study attempted to determine if there was evidence of change in attitude toward school in a classroom setting where more time was available to help students deal with their problem behaviors.

Limitations of the Study

This study was confined to a small number of students attending school in a homogenous rural midwestern community. The results should not be interpreted to apply to all sixth grade students in all areas of the country. This study should not be construed to suggest that the same results for the treatment group would not have happened without intervention.

Often in the school setting it is not possible to set up a truly experimental study because there are not funds available for such studies and because there are not enough students available with a particular problem to allow for more than one group. This study had both of those problems. To determine what might have happened to the treatment group if they had been left in the departmentalized classroom, students from the departmentalized classrooms were selected for a comparison group. The students in the comparison group were deemed not to have had enough overt problem behaviors to have been placed in the treatment group. While this lack of overt problem behaviors at school for the comparison group may have made them different from the

treatment group, the presentation of information about them will provide a picture of what might have happened to the students in the treatment group if they had not been removed from the departmentalized classroom.

The individual students of the comparison group were members of a three teacher departmentalized program. The treatment group was a self-contained group taught by a fourth teacher who had a wide knowledge of affective skills. There is no reason to assume that the same results would be obtained with other teachers whose background, experience and skills could vary widely.

The fifth grade classroom teachers in this study identified students for the self-contained classroom based on their memory of events during the school year. Their memory may have been inaccurate due to time lag and personal bias. All students in the treatment group were deemed to have had a significantly greater number of overt problem behaviors than those students in the comparison group. This may not have been true.

The children in the treatment group exhibited behavior which caused them to be selected by the criteria listed in the procedure section. It was assumed those problems were overt manifestations of their attitudes toward school. It does not seem reasonable to assume that another group of children would have the same problems or attitudes toward school for the same reasons.

Many of the activities in this study were provided in response to a need as perceived by the teacher at the time. Results might well be different if the activities had been different or provided at a different time in the school year.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

No studies were found which were concerned with bringing about a positive attitude change toward school with concomitant achievement gains in a small self-contained classroom of students with behavior problems. Reports of research dealing with the modification of behavior in various classroom settings, the effect of attitude change on behavior change, and how attitude toward school affects academic achievement were found. These, along with opinions of authorities on the topics of class discussion, brain research, and class size provided information that may be useful when considering the positive attitude changes toward school with a concomitant academic achievement gains in a small self-contained classroom of students with behavior problems.

Modification of Acting-Out Behavior

In a study of Quay, Glavin, Annesley, and Werry, and reported by Quay, elementary students with conduct disorders were referred by their classroom teachers to a resource room for one or two periods a day for sixteen weeks.[1] The

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[1]Herbert C. Quay, "Behavior Disorders in the Classroom," Journal of Research and Development in Education, II, No. 2 (1978), 8-17.

resource room was structured in such a way as to provide students with individual work areas. A token system was used to provide reinforcement for good behavior. The students showed significant change in such social behavior as disobedience, disruptiveness, fighting, impertinence, defiance of authority, quarrelsomeness, and dislike for school, as well as achievement in reading and arithmetic.

Pratt conducted an eight week experimental class for ten intermediate grade boys who had a history of disruptive behavior.[1] The classroom was divided into a work area and a free time area. A token system was used to provide reinforcement for good behavior and good work. The boys were difficult to manage. Pratt writes that, "Much of our energy went into adjusting the social environment so everyone would be able to work. This involved ignoring certain behaviors, rewarding others and sometimes having a direct confrontation."[2] The classroom was deemed successful in improving behavior as measured by the increase of check marks used in the token system.

Rowe, Murphy and DecSpikes conducted a study of 164 students, aged twelve to nineteen, who were referred to an alternative program. They attended classes three to six hours a day.

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[1]Teressa Marjorie Pratt, "A Positive Approach to Disruptive Behavior," Today's Education, LXII (January 1973), 18-19.

[2]Ibid., p. 19.

> The actual length of their stay in the alternative program was indefinite, although a student could earn the right to return to a regular program by making and fulfilling a contract based on attendance, schoolwork, and in-school behavior. The alternative school was staffed by a coordinator, two counselors, four teachers, five aides, and at times as many as six student teachers.[1]

The evaluation of the effectiveness of this program was difficult to determine. A majority of parents and students contacted said they liked the program. There were insufficient controls to determine academic achievement due to the program. Changes in behavior patterns were difficult to assess also.

Shook reported a study involving highly disruptive students in grades one through nine. A student attended a special class one-half day on a daily basis until his/her behavior was no longer a problem in the regular classroom. The program was built on a philosophy of:

> (1) putting the responsibility on the student whenever possible, (2) being consistent but flexible in the enforcement of basic classroom management rules, and (3) finding alternatives for classroom activities, rewards and consequences so the student does not force himself into a corner.[2]

Shook writes that six basic teaching techniques were used with the students: behavior modification, individually-planned instruction, cross-age tutoring, rearrangement

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[1]Wayne Rowe, Harry B. Murphy, and Robert DecSipkes, "Behavioral Programs for Problem Students," Personnel and Guidance Journal, LII (May, 1974), 609-612.

[2]Judy Shook, "Alternatives for Management of Disruptive Classroom Behaviors," School and Community, LXI (May, 1975), 28-29.

of physical environment, small group counseling sessions, and parental involvement.[1] There was no indication of how this project was evaluated.

Kelly and Matthews conducted a study of the effects of a group counseling approach in dealing with discipline-problem children in fifth and sixth grade.[2] Eleven children were randomly selected from a list of names of serious discipline-problem children submitted by classroom teachers for a treatment group and ten more for a control group. Two counselors met with the treatment group for one hour eight times over a ten week period. During the counseling sessions, the children were told that two behaviors were expected of them and that they would be rewarded when they happened. The classroom teachers rated all of their students using a school checklist before and after treatment. The results of the ratings failed to show any significant change.

Effects of Attitude on Behavior

There are few studies available which deal with the effect that attitudes have upon behavior.

> The relative neglect of the relation between attitude and behavior can in large part be

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[1] Ibid., p. 29.

[2] Eugene W. Kelly, Jr., and Doris B. Matthews, "Group Counseling with Discipline-Problem Children at the Elementary School Level," The School Counselor, XVIII (March, 1971), 273-278.

> attributed to the widespread acceptance of the assumption that there is a close correspondence between the ways in which a person behaves toward some object and his beliefs, feelings, and intentions with respect to that object. In fact, the term 'attitude' was introduced in social psychology as an explanatory device in an attempt to understand human behavior. . . .[M]ost investigators would agree with the definition of attitude as a learned predisposition to respond to an object in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner. This definition implies a strong link between attitude and behavior, and the traditional view has been that any stimulus object comes to elicit an attitude which mediates or determines all responses to the object.[1]

Wicker identified studies in which, ". . . at least one attitudinal measure and one overt behavioral measure toward the same object . . . [were] . . . obtained for each subject . . ."[2] In these studies he found that attitudes were unrelated or only slightly related to overt behaviors.[3]

Fishbein and Ajzen write that despite the failure to show a strong relationship between attitude and behavior, ". . . the basic assumption that human behavior is determined by attitudes continued to persist."[4]

Insko and Schopler have suggested the possibility

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[1]Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen, Belief, Attitude, Intention and Behavior: An Introduction to Theory and Research (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1975), p. 336.

[2]Allan W. Wicker, "Attitudes versus Actions: The Relationships of Verbal and Overt Behavioral Responses to Attitude Objects," Journal of Social Issues, XXV, No. 4 (1969), 47-51.

[3]Ibid., p. 65.

[4]Fishbein and Ajzen, p. 340.

that much evidence showing a close relationship between attitudes and behavior has been obtained but never published because researchers and journal editors considered such findings unexciting and not worthy of publication. Wicker, Insko and Schopler call for the publication of research that deals with the relationship of attitude on behavior.[1]

Discussion Groups

The studies cited above attempted to change problem behavior by dealing with particular behaviors. Many researchers see behavior as an outward manifestation of an attitude.[2]

> The behavior we observe in ourselves and in others is only a symptom of what is going on within. The behaviors people engage in are not beginnings, but ends; they are not causes but results.[3]

Combs writes that,

> Since human feelings, attitudes, and beliefs are basic to behavior, they must rank high on any list of public school objectives. Controlling behavior is dealing only with symptoms. Changes in feelings,

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[1]Wicker, p. 65; Chester A. Insko and John Schopler, "Triadic Consistency: A Statement of Affective-Cognitive-Conative Consistency," Psychological Review, LXXIV, No. 5 (1975), 374.

[2]Daryl J. Bem, Beliefs, Attitudes, and Human Affairs (Belmont, California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, 1970), p. 54; Herbert Sorenson, Psychology in Education (4th ed.; New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), p. 373; Arthur W. Combs, Donald L. Avila, William W. Purkey, Helping Relationships Basic Concepts for the Helping Professions (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1971), p. 106.

[3]Ibid., p. 103.

> attitudes, and beliefs can make behavior control unnecessary.[1]

If children are provided with information on a personal level that will help them understand the need to change their attitude, they may change their behavior in that direction. "Any information will affect a person's behavior only insofar as he or she . . . [is able to discover] . . . the personal meaning of that information."[2]

Discussion is seen as a way to help children discover personal meaning as a way to developing more positive attitudes. Clark and Kadis, Webster, Kindsvatter, Wilde and Sommers, Kohl, and Glasser write about the value of class discussion to help children discover at a personal level the meaning necessary to deal with the problems which develop at school.[3] Clark and Kadis suggest that through regularly scheduled discussion, students can bring complaints and

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[1]Arthur W. Combs, "Humanistic Education: Too Tender for a Tough World?" Phi Delta Kappan, LXII, No. 6 (1981), 447.

[2]Ibid., p. 448.

[3]Staten W. Webster, Discipline in the Classroom (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Company, 1968), p. 5; Herbert R. Kohl, The Open Classroom (New York: The New York Review, 1969), p. 31; Richard Kindsvatter, "A New View of the Dynamics of Discipline," Phi Delta Kappan, LIX, No. 5 (1978), 332; John Wilde and Peggy Sommer, "Teaching Disruptive Adolescents: A Game Worth Winning," Phi Delta Kappan, LIX, No. 5, 342; William Glasser, Schools Without Failure (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1969), pp. 123, 131; Donald H. Clark and Asya L. Kadis, Humanistic Teaching (Columbus: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1971), p. 66.

conflicts that develop during their daily interaction.[1] "It can take place before academic subjects get under way or at the close of the school day. The idea is to air positive and negative feelings and reactions--the problems and conflicts of the classroom community."[2] Glasser calls the discussions, class meetings. The teacher and the students interact in an interesting, intellectually enjoyable way on a daily basis.[3] Through class meetings Glasser has, ". . . demonstrated in class after class that getting involved, eliminating failure, and encouraging children to think, motivates them to learn and greatly reduces behavior problems."[4]

Kadis wrote about a school she visited for a number of weeks in Vienna where she was able to observe class discussion in progress. The discussions were held at the close of each school day.[5]

> Among the topics were decisions for the next day or week and setting rules as well as means of enforcing them. I became convinced that the youngsters learned a great deal in that one hour about

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[1]Clark and Kadis, p. 66.

[2]Ibid.

[3]William Glasser, "Disorders in Our Schools: Causes and Remedies," Phi Delta Kappan, LIX, No. 5 (1978), 332.

[4]William Glasser, The Identity Society (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1972), p. 6.

[5]Clark and Kadis, p. 66.

> living together, their motivations and their behavior, and were gaining understanding of themselves and their classmates. They seemed to think and reason, to plan, to take active part in things, to be helpful and cooperative. They were developing more self-confidence, becoming more friendly and considerate. In short, I felt the group discussions contributed enormously to their character development and the growth process.[1]

Brain Research

Brain research points out the need for students to have the opportunity to discuss their problems and work through solutions. Hart writes that, "Young children in particular must talk to learn well and rapidly, for a great portion of the human brain . . . is devoted to language, particularly the neocortex."[2]

The neocortex does not function well under threat.[3] The student can perceive the lowering of group status or damage to possessions or symbols as a threat.[4] It can be triggered by a reprimand, a put-down, a publicly exposed and recorded failure, and the laughter, mockery, or rejection of classmates.[5] When the neocortex is unable to deal with

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Leslie A. Hart, "The New 'Brain' Concept of Learning," Phi Delta Kappan, LIX, No. 6 (1978), 394.

[3] Leslie A. Hart, "The Three-Brain Concept and the Classroom," Phi Delta Kappan, LXII, No. 7 (1981), 505.

[4] Leslie A. Hart, How the Brain Works (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1975), p. 130.

[5] Ibid., pp. 130-31.

a situation quickly enough, "It can be temporarily shunted out of the decision making as older, simpler circuits take over. A suitable term for this is 'downshifting'."[1] These simpler circuits are described by Sagon in writing about Mac Lean's triune brain concept as the limbic system and the reptilian complex.[2] The reptilian complex takes care of basic survival, the limbic system deals with issues on an emotional level, and the neocortex provides complex and detailed analysis of situations providing answers with deliberate speed.[3]

Under threat, students downshift to cruder more traditional ways of behaving. The type of behavior demonstrated will be determined by the degree of threat perceived.[4] Hart writes that, ". . . the less secure or confident the individual, the more readily threat will be perceived, and the faster and deeper the downshifting."[5] When threat is reduced and confidence is built up, the more effectively a student can use his neocortex.[6] The antidote to downshifting is confidence.[7]

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[1]Ibid., p. 127.

[2]Carl Sagan, The Dragons of Eden (New York: Ballantine Books, 1977), p. 59.

[3]Hart, "The Three-Brain Concept," p. 505.

[4]Hart, How the Brain Works, p. 127.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Ibid., p. 180.

[7]Ibid., p. 229.

Class Size

From their analysis of studies on class size, Olson, and Glass, Cahen, Smith and Filby report that student achievement improves substantially when the size of the class is fifteen or less.[1] Bozzomo writes that, "Too many children in the class make it impossible for each child to explore, question, discuss, or analyze elements of relationships or ideas--let alone put these relationships or ideas together to form a complete model that might emerge as a pattern or structure not clearly perceived before."[2]

Smith and Glass, using meta-analysis, found that, "Class size affects pupil's attitudes, either as a function of better performance or contributing to it. In smaller classes, pupils have more interest in learning. There seems to be less apathy, friction, frustration."[3] Olson reports from his study of class-size when classes are smaller:

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[1]Martin N. Olson, "Research Findings that Support Small Class Size," Class Size, Reference & Resource Series (Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 1977), p. 18; Gene V. Glass, Leonard S. Cahen, Mary Lee Smith, and Nikola N. Filby, "Class Size and Learning--New Interpretation of the Research Literature," Today's Education, LXVIII (April-May, 1979), 43.

[2]Lawrence E. Bozzomo, "Does Class Size Matter?" The National Elementary Principal, LVII, No. 2 (1978), 80.

[3]Mary Lee Smith and Gene V. Glass, Relationship of Class-size to Classroom Processes, Teacher Satisfaction and Pupil Affect: A Meta-Analysis (San Francisco: Far West Laboratory, 1979), p. 46.

> Students commit fewer aggressive acts like fighting, shoving, pushing, crowding and striking. Their frustrations are fewer and teachers are better able to diagnose causes of misbehavior and deal effectively with individuals before major problems occur. As a result there are fewer interruptions of the actual learning process; and student restlessness, tension, and personal conflicts are at healthier, nondisruptive levels.[1]

Attitudes and Achievement

Many authors suggest that there should be a positive relationship between attitude toward school and scholastic achievement.[2] Jackson writes that scholastic success and positive attitudes toward school are related in either direction and are cyclic. He concluded that other things being equal, children who are the most satisfied with school ought to be among the ones who are the most successful in the classroom and children who are the most successful in the classroom ought to be among the ones who are the most satisfied with school.[3]

On the other hand, a study conducted by Tschechtelin,

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[1]Olson, p. 21.

[2]Henriette M. Lahaderine, Adaptation to School Settings: A Study of Children's Attitudes and Classroom Behavior, U.S., Educational Resources Information Center, ERIC Document ED 012 943, 1967, p. 1; David J. Alvord, "Achievement and Attitude," The Science Teacher, XXXIX, No. 4 (1972), 36; Oren Glich, The Interdependence of Sixth Graders' School Attitudes and Academic Performance, U.S., Educational Resources Information Center, ERIC Document ED 035 033, 1969.

[3]Philip W. Jackson, Life in Classrooms (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1968), pp. 73-74.

Hipshind and Remmers in Indiana, 1,357 children in grades four through eight were given a diagnostic teacher rating scale.[1] There was no appreciable correlation between attitudes toward teachers and group intelligence scores, nor was there any relationship between achievement as measured by grades given by teachers and attitudes.

Tenenbaum conducted a study of 639 sixth and seventh grade children in New York City.[2] The School Attitude Questionnaire Test which Tenenbaum had developed was used. The results of that test were correlated with the results from the Otis Classification Test and school records. Seven of eight variables correlated positively with attitude toward school, however the correlations were so low as to have no significant value.

Malpass conducted a study of ninety-two eighth grade children in a small upstate New York town.[3] A composite attitude toward school score for each child was obtained by combining the results from the Sentence Completion Test, School Pictures Test, and the Personal Document

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[1]Sister M. Anatora Tschechtelin, Sister M. John Frances Hipshind, and H. H. Remmers, "Measuring the Attitudes of Elementary School Children Toward Their Teachers," Journal of Educational Psychology, XXXI, No. 3 (1940, 195-203.

[2]Samuel Tenenbaum, "Attitudes of Elementary School Children to School, Teachers and Classmates," Journal of Applied Psychology, XXVIII (April, 1944), 134-141.

[3]Leslie F. Malpass, "Some Relationships Between Students' Perceptions of School and Their Achievement," Journal of Educational Psychology, XLIV, No. 8 (1953), 475-482.

Test, School Pictures Test, and the Personal Document Test. Two measures of achievement, end-of-semester grades and Stanford Achievement Test scores, were used. A significant relationship was found between attitude toward school and end-of-semester grades, but no relationship was found to exist between attitude toward school and standardized achievement test scores.

Jackson and Getzels conducted a study of 531 children from grades seven through twelve in a midwestern private school.[1] On the basis of the Student Opinion Poll ninety-two extreme scorers were identified as satisfied with school or dissatisfied with school. These students were compared using the Binet intelligence test, and standardized verbal and numerical achievement tests. "Contrary to popular expectations the 'satisfied' and 'dissatisfied' students did not differ from each other in general intellectual ability or in scholastic achievement."[2]

Brodie conducted a study in Minnesota of ninety-two children selected from five hundred eleventh graders.[3] Using the results of the Student Opinion Poll the children

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[1]Philip W. Jackson and Jacob W. Getzels, "Psychological Health and Classroom Functioning: A Study of Dissatisfaction with School Among Adolescents," Journal of Education Psychology, L, No. 6 (1959), 295-300.

[2]Ibid., p. 297.

[3]Thomas A. Brodie, "Attitude Toward School and Academic Achievement," Personnel and Guidance Journal, XLIII, No. 4 (1964), 375-378.

were divided into two groups, satisfied with school and dissatisfied with school. The groups were then compared using the Iowa Test of Educational Development. The study found that there was a significant difference between the achievement of the satisfied group and the dissatisfied group. The satisfied group had higher achievement scores.

Jackson and Lahaderne conducted a study of 292 sixth grade children from a suburb of Chicago.[1] The children were given the Student Opinion Poll II and the Michigan Student Questionnaire. The scores from the attitudes toward school inventories were correlated with grades given by the classroom teachers and scores from the Stanford Achievement Test. There was no significant relationship between attitudes toward school and scholastic achievement.

Alvord conducted a study of 3162 Iowa students in grades four, seven and twleve.[2] Two attitude-toward-school measures were developed by Instructional Objectives Exchange; the School Sentiment Index Intermediate Level was administered to pupils in grades four and seven, and the School Sentiment Index Secondary Level was administered to pupils in grade twelve. The attitude-toward school scores were correlated with scores from the science section of the

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[1]Philip W. Jackson and Henriette M. Lahaderne, "Scholastic Success and Attitude Toward School in a Population of Sixth Graders," Journal of Educational Psychology, LVIII, No. 1 (1967), 15-18.

[2]Alvord, pp. 36-38.

National Assessment of Educational Progress. The authors reported a low significant relationship.

Summary

Research was cited which shows that it is not uncommon for children with problem behavior to be placed in small groups where they can get help dealing with behavior. Some authorities write that small class size will reduce aggressive acts and will affect children's attitudes. Studies were cited which dealt with problem behavior using a variety of approaches. However, behavior modification was common to each. Other authorities take the position that behavior modification deals with symptoms. They suggest that an approach that can make behavior modification unnecessary is attitude change. The limited research related to the effect of attitudes on behavior change shows at best only a slight relationship. Several writers suggest, however, that much evidence showing a stronger relationship has not been published because it is considered unexciting.

The present study is based upon the research which indicates that children with problem behavior can be helped through placement in small groups where they receive individual attention. This research suggests that there may be a causal relationship between attitudes and behavior.

Some studies point to the value of daily class discussion in bringing about positive attitude change. Daily

class discussion provides a forum for children to talk about their problems and work through solutions, an opportunity which brain research supports as important if they are to function at their highest mental capability during stressful situations. The present study makes use of the research on class discussion and the brain. The children were provided about forty-five minutes each day to discuss their problems. They were given many opportunities to follow up on the solutions generated during the discussions.

A major goal of schools is the scholastic success of children. Whatever else is done should support the goal of scholastic success. Many authorities cited hold that children who have a positive attitude toward school will do better scholastically. One study showed a statistically significant relationship between positive attitudes toward school and scholastic achievement. Two other studies showed a low positive relationship and four studies showed no relationship. Jackson writes, however, that, "Any evidence that runs counter to common-sense expectations is best approached with healthy skepticism."[1] This study has attempted to provide more information dealing with the relation between attitudes toward school and scholastic achievement.

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[1]Jackson, p. 79.

Chapter 3

PROCEDURES

This study was designed to determine if students would show a significant change in their academic achievement and attitude toward school if they were placed in a small self-contained classroom where they could spend extra time working on their individual needs. The plan was to select students who were having behavior problems and to work on those problems in the smaller setting and to compare their academic achievement, attitude toward school, and behavior at school to a similar group of students who had not demonstrated behavior problems and were in a departmentalized setting. The comparison was to be made to see if there was a significant difference between students teachers deemed to have behavior problems and those they did not. The study also attempted to discover if there is a significant correlation between attitude toward school and behavior at school, and attitude toward school and academic achievement. Both of these correlations were calculated to provide information which seemed to be lacking in the literature.

Permission to initiate the study was obtained from school district officials. Discussions were held with the four fifth grade teachers who had students who were having

discipline problems. Through the discussions, criteria were developed which were to be used in selecting specific students for the class.

Fourteen students were identified as candidates who might benefit from the class. Thirteen of the students were boys and one was a girl. One boy moved away during the identification process. The staff felt that it would not be appropriate to have a class of twelve boys and one girl. She would not have another girl to identify with and she could have possibly become the brunt of inappropriate behavior from the boys. The twelve boys were selected for the class.

A successful class depended on the appointment of a teacher who had an interest in working with students with behavior problems as well as the cooperation of the other sixth grade teachers. Two teachers on staff considered taking the position. One of those teachers, a fourth grade teacher, was selected. She had worked with seven of the students when they were in fourth grade. Since the self-contained class would be about half the size of a departmentalized class care was taken to go over the plans for the self-contained room with the teachers of the departmentalized classes. They agreed that the plan should be put into operation.

Since the plan for the self-contained classroom was different from anything that had ever been tried in this

community, it was decided that the Board of Education should be informed and its approval sought. The Board of Education considered the plan and gave its approval.

After Board of Education approval was obtained, a conference was arranged with the parents of each identified student. The goals for the conferences were to inform the parents about the planned self-contained room and to secure their cooperation. Each conference was attended by the identified student's parents, the fifth grade homeroom teacher, the future self-contained sixth grade teacher, and the building principal. The fifth grade homeroom teacher reviewed the problems that the student had had during his fifth grade year. The future self-contained sixth grade teacher and the building principal outlined the program for dealing with the problems described. The program included the following: (1) one teacher would be responsible for the students, (2) that teacher would get to know the students much better than four teachers in a departmentalized setting, (3) in a small group each student would have more time with the teacher, (4) in a small group there would be fewer distractions, (5) in a small group there would be more time to discuss behavior problems, (6) in a small group more activities would be planned to provide positive experiences to supplement the discussions, and (7) with a small group the teacher would be better able to contact parents on a regular basis.

All parents recognized that their child had had behavior problems at school and needed help with them, however, they expressed concerns about the effects the self-contained room would have on him. Those concerns are summarized in the following two questions: Would not separating twelve children from the other sixth grade children create more problems between them than if they had been left together? Would not the twelve children be branded as trouble makers and would this not do more harm than if they had been left in the departmentalized classes? The parents were told that the twelve children would be integrated with the other children in art, in music, in physical education, in the lunch room, and on the playground at recess. The children would not be separated during the less structured times of the day. The parents were assured that a concerted effort would be made to keep the self-contained classroom low key and that no special notations would be made in the student's records which would alert future teachers to the fact that they had been in the self-contained classroom.

After the initial conferences, seven pairs of parents agreed to have their children placed in the class. One set of parents refused to have their child placed in the class. Four parents said they would need to give their decision further consideration. The parents of one boy asked for a second conference with the principal and the future self-contained sixth grade teacher. The other three sets

of parents requested a conference by phone with the principal. The second conferences were sought essentially to gain reassurance that, if their children were placed in the self-contained room, they would not be subjected to undue negative treatment either during or after the year. Before school was out for the summer, the parents of eleven boys agreed to have their children placed in the self-contained sixth grade classroom.

Comparison Group

This study made use of a comparison group to provide information about what might have happened if the students in the treatment group had remained in the departmentalized sixth grade classrooms. The comparison group was selected using a matched pairs method. The criteria for making up the pairs were that each set of students should: (1) be from the same attendance center, (2) be the same sex, (3) be in the same grade, (4) be within one year of the same age, and (5) have national norms composite grade scores of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills administered September 1978 within four months of the same score. The comparison group was not matched with the treatment group on the criterion of overt problem behavior. The eleven students selected for the comparison group were drawn from the three homerooms of the departmentalized sixth grade.

Treatment Group

The first day of school the students in the sixth grade self-contained class found their room much as the custodian had left it after the summer cleaning. The desks and chairs were stacked in the corner, the bulletin boards were bare, and the new materials were yet to be unpacked. The first major activities were to have the students help put materials away, organize the furniture, and discuss what should be placed on the bulletin boards. These activities were designed to help the children develop a sense of ownership of the classroom.

The social studies program for the first semester focused on the theme, finding out more about me. Activities were designed to cause the students to think about who they were and how they felt about themselves. Language and social studies periods were often combined for writing and discussing topics such as, "Who am I? What am I good at? What I would like to be. Areas I need to improve upon."[1] Through discussions students were to learn about themselves and each other. It was hoped that the common knowledge would help students develop comradeship.

The teacher conducted discussions with the students about the reasons the self-contained room was set up. They recognized that they had problems, but they did not feel

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[1]Statement by the teacher of the self-contained classroom, personal interview, August 20, 1981.

that those problems were any worse than the problems many other sixth grade students had. They felt they were in the self-contained classroom because previous teachers, aides, and the principal would not listen to their side of a problem. The students said that if they had only been given a chance to explain why they had not done as the teacher or aide had told them, why they had called another student a name, why they had been in a fight, why they had not done their school work, why they would not do their school work, and why they had talked back to the teacher or aide, then everyone would have know they were right. Even though the students thought there had been a miscarriage of justice, they did talk about and set behavior goals they wanted to achieve during the year. They said they wanted to make more friends, have fewer fights, spend less time in the office and have fewer phone calls home about their bad behavior.

The students, as their parents had been, were concerned that other students would ridicule them for being in the self-contained room. The teacher assured them that she would work with the other teachers in the building to prevent this from happening. Since the teacher knew that the students in the self-contained room often created problems by their ridicule of other students she pursued the topic with them. She asked the students to answer the

the question, "How do you feel when people put you down?"[1] Each student was allowed to use any medium he wished. The forms used were writing, drawing and modeling clay. After several days of work, each student shared with the others in the class what he had done. Discussions focused on helping the students understand how others felt after they had been put down. As a result of this activity a room rule was developed which stated, "Do not put others down."[2] The students did not stop making sarcastic remarks about other students, but in the room at least they were often heard to say, "I was only kidding."[3]

During the first few weeks of school the students, from all outward signs, accepted being in the self-contained room. Shortly thereafter they began to talk about being in a special class and that they were dumb. The teacher kept reassuring them that they were in the class to work on behavior problems, not because they were dumb. Throughout the year the students often referred to being in a dumb class and they continually needed to be reassured that they were capable of academic success. The reason for the students referring to themselves as dumb was never determined. The teacher and the principal concluded though that since the building which housed the self-contained sixth grade room also housed an educable mentally retarded

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

special education classroom, the only other self-contained classroom, the self-contained students viewed themselves as special and therefore, dumb.

As the students from the self-contained room became involved in more fights, arguments and incidents of defying authority, time was set aside each morning for them to discuss what had happened after school the night before, while coming to school that morning, and on the playground just before school started. When behavior problems developed during class, time was taken right then to talk about them. During these discussions the teacher helped the students explore ways they could avoid or aid in solving the problems which caused the disruptions. Often the discussions dealt with following rules, paying attention to people in authority, and the way to interact with other children. As a follow-up to those discussions the students read and talked about selections from I Am Not a Short Adult by Marilyn Burns.[1]

Many of the behavior problems that developed involving students from the self-contained room on the playground started during competitive games. During the discussions about playground problems the students talked about competition and why it is needed to make games happen. Drawing knowledge from The New Games Book edited by

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[1]Marilyn Burns, I Am Not a Short Adult: Getting Good at Being a Kid (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1977).

Andrew Fluegelman, the teacher talked with the students about the need for resistance in every game and how often the resistance is supplied by an opponent. Because the resistance is necessary for the game to take place, then the opponent is really a partner.[1] Time was provided for the students to go to the gymnasium, the playground and the high school track/football field to play games outlined in The New Games Book.

The students were able to talk about the reasons why they needed to follow rules and pay attention to people in authority. They were able to describe how they were going to interact with other students on the playground, school bus, and in the school building. While they participated in activities from The New Games Book with each other, they got along very well. However, they continued to have problems following through on their goals when they interacted with students not from their room. They became angry and wanted to change the rules when a game was not going their way. They talked back to aides and bus drivers when they were corrected.

A specific example of their inability to follow through on a goal involving other students happened during an activity to develop better relationships. All of the students wanted to develop better relationships with a

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[1]Andrew Fluegelman, ed., The New Games Book (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1976).

small group of students from another sixth grade room with whom they were having difficulties on the playground. It was decided that the other students would be invited to the self-contained room. The self-contained students would show and tell, have a good time, and, hopefully, change what they thought were bad attitudes toward them. Arrangements were made and the invitations were accepted. All went well until a few minutes after the visitors arrived when one of the hosts announced, "We got you in here to show you we're not stupid, we're normal."[1] The visit was cast in a new light. The visitors became ill at ease. There was very little discussion from that point, and the visitors soon left.

During the early part of the first semester role playing was used to get at the feelings of anger, frustration and humiliation. The students were uncomfortable with this activity. The teacher felt the students were going through with it only because she asked them to. She also felt that many times the conversations were what they thought she wanted to hear. Often the solutions to problems presented were some form of physical punishment, the kind they said they received at home.[2] The students became

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[1]Statement by the teacher of the self-contained classroom, personal interview, August 20, 1981.

[2]Ibid.

resistive to this type of activity and it was dropped after limited use.

During the first semester the students started viewing "Vegetable Soup II" and "Inside/Out" two television programs which were aired each week throughout the school year over the Iowa Public Broadcasting Network. "Vegetable Soup II" dealt with the domain of feelings and attitudes and "Inside/Out" emphasized communication skills, and interacting with others.[1] The programs were discussion starters which caused students to focus on developing the understanding that through working together cooperatively they could get to know each other better. Student response was usually loud talking. There were several students who could present their ideas so forcefully that the discussion never got started. The teacher would, therefore, sometimes ask each student to write his reaction to what he had seen and then later share it with the class. The television programs ran for fifteen minutes and the discussion usually lasted another twenty-five minutes.

The students were adept at prolonging discussions provided that they did not have to give up recess, a time they considered to be theirs. On a variety of occasions

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[1]Bernarr Cooper, Project Administrator, Vegetable Soup II Parent Teacher Guide & Cookbook (Albany: The New York State Education Dept. Bureau of Mass Communications [n.d.]); and Orvis A. Harrelson, Inside Out A Guide for Teachers (Bloomington: National Instructional Television Center, 1973).

both the teacher and principal talked to students without making any progress until it was time for recess. An example of the ability of several students to argue their point and the prolonging of the discussion happened when the principal was asked to talk with the students about their request to change the times of their lunch and recess. They felt that the problems they were having with other students would be eliminated if they could go to lunch and recess by themselves. During the discussion, the principal pointed out the difficulties involved in making changes in the schedule. He also told them why they should continue to be with students other than those in their class. After much restating of their request and talk about problems with specific students some of them began to change their minds. One of the students began to argue that they should not allow the principal to change their minds. After all, that was his job, and they knew what they wanted and they should get it. As lunch time drew near, the students agreed they should leave the schedule as it was. The discussion had taken two hours.

The students were provided with opportunities to plan and carry out group activities. These activities enabled them to practice planning following through, and cooperating. As a part of their social studies they were to find out about their heritage. A trip to a local cemetery was planned to look for stones that might bear the names of their ancestors. The students contacted the caretaker to

ask permission to visit the cemetery and to see if he would be willing to be there to answer questions. Later the students made arrangements to visit a nursing home. They demonstrated a caring attitude when they gave the residents a gift they all could enjoy. The students invited their grandparents to school to talk about their childhood. They organized the activities for the morning. In October when the students were planning their Halloween Party they discovered that for religious reasons two of them could not take part. It was decided that it would not be fair to have a party without two members of the class. The party was delayed until Thanksgiving when everyone could take part.

Parent Contacts

Parents were kept informed about what was going on in the self-contained room through notes sent home on a regular basis, phone calls, face-to-face conferences lasting less than five minutes before and after school, and formal conferences. The notes provided parents with routine information about activities that were happening in the classroom. The teacher also used notes to let parents know when a student was falling behind in work, what work was to be turned in the next day, and when a student had had a good day. Phone calls were used to inform parents when a student had had a bad day, when a specific problem needed immediate attention, and when a student had had a

good day. The phone was not used as much for good news calls as bad news calls because good news notes seemed to get home more often than the bad news notes. The quick face-to-face conferences were usually initiated by the parents because they not only wanted to visit with the teacher but also wanted to see work or to visit with the teacher and their child at the same time. The formal conference was used to provide parents with detailed information about their child's academic and/or behavioral development.

Discipline Techniques

The primary approach in dealing with behavior problems was to talk about the problem and how it could possibly be dealt with in the future. There were times when a behavior problem developed that needed another approach. Techniques used by the teacher were providing a place outside the classroom where a student could go until he was ready to appropriately take part in class, taking away a privilege as a penalty for misbehavior, and calling the student's parent to report a discipline problem.

Late in the first semester the teacher began using assertive discipline techniques as outlined by Lee Canter in his book, Assertive Discipline.[1] In setting up the

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[1]Lee Canter with Marlene Canter, Assertive Discipline A Take Charge Approach for Today's Educator (Los Angeles: Canter and Associates, Inc., 1976).

assertive discipline approach, the teacher led a discussion on room rules. Some of the rules had been developed earlier in the year, they were now formalized, written down and posted. The rules were: (1) Do not put others down, (2) Be helpful and kind, (3) Do assignments first, (4) Good work deserves rewards, and (5) No buy, sell or trade. Rule number four was not a rule in the sense that students were penalized if they broke it, but rather they were rewarded when they did their work well. Rewards were: (1) getting to work with another student, (2) getting to select a game to play, and (3) a few minutes free time to spend as the student wished as long as he did not bother other students. The fifth rule dealt with a problem the students had of selling and trading items among themselves. It often disrupted class and sometimes caused arguments to develop.[1]

If a student broke rules one, two, three, or five his name was put on the chalk board. The next time the student broke a rule, a check mark was placed by his name and he lost a recess. If the same student broke a rule again another check mark was placed by his name and he lost a recess. If the same student broke a rule again, another check mark was placed by his name and he lost another recess. Recesses were very important to the students

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[1]Statement by the teacher of the self-contained classroom, personal interview, August 20, 1981.

and rarely did three check marks ever appear by their names, however, if a third check mark was placed by a student's name, his parents were called for a conference.

The students continued to have the same type of behavior problems during the second semester that they had had during the first semester. The teacher continued to provide a time each morning to discuss problems they were having outside the room. The television programs "Vegetable Soup II" and "Inside/Out" were used and another, "Self Incorporated," was added. "Self Incorporated" provided opportunities for students to develop skills of awareness, self-understanding and understanding social situations which would help them to recognize an issue, problem, or opportunity, and the need to deal with it.[1] Films which dealt with the specific problem areas of rules, fighting, finding lost property, and anger were used.

There was no observable change in the students' behavior or their attitude toward the self-contained classroom. They complained that the room was just like a jail. When an activity went well for them, they failed to see the positive side of it. One afternoon during the sixth grade recess a snowball fight erupted. Eighteen students were disciplined for their part in the forbidden activity, none of them from the self-contained room. The

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[1]Lochie B. Christopher and Orvis A. Harrelson, Guide to Self Incorporated (Bloomington: Agency for Instructional Television, 1975).

self-contained students discussed why they had not been involved in the snowball fight. Most of them found it difficult to believe that sixth grade students were being disciplined for a behavior problem and they were not involved. One student commented that if he had known about the snowball fight he probably would have taken part.

The students had difficulty following directions. "These kids seemed to just want to dive into everything and do it 'my' way and if it doesn't work, well it doesn't work. If they can blame it on something else other than themselves that was the way they wanted to go."[1] During science class the students were talking about motors. As a culminating activity the teacher obtained five kits of small battery operated motors for the students to put together. They were to work in groups of two or three. A grandmother, an elderly man, and the custodian were in the room to help the students. The teacher reviewed with the students the need to follow directions and the need to cooperate with each other. The students found the directions difficult, left them, and did the activity their way. One motor was put together, the others were left in parts about the room. Later in the semester several of the students attended an auto show and became interested in building model racing cars. With help from a high school industrial education teacher the students built racing cars.

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[1]Statement by teacher of self-contained classroom.

They went to the high school industrial shop on two occasions to use power tools. In the spring the students organized a race with the industrial education teacher officiating. The students from the other sixth grade classes were invited to watch the race.

The self-contained class participated in activities with the other sixth grades as often as possible. As a part of a language activity on parliamentary procedure each class set up a club which then organized a bake sale. All of the clubs worked together. In the annual spring musical four of the self-contained students got major parts. The rest were in the chorus.

The students who needed extra help because of special learning problems received remedial reading and specific learning-disability help as did the students in the other sixth grades. There were two students who were accelerated in math. They received help from an area education agency mathematics consultant who stopped on a regular basis.

Throughout the school year the students expressed fear about going to junior high school. As nearly as could be determined, they were afraid they would not know how to get from class to class and how to act. To help the students overcome these fears a new approach to junior high school orientation was developed. The counselors, principal and associate principal were asked to talk to the class and answer questions about the junior high school

program. Then about two weeks later the students were taken to the junior high school for a tour of the facility. So the self-contained class could not be identified by the junior high school staff, one of the departmentalized classes was mixed with them during each activity.

At the end of the school year the students in each grade take a field trip together. The students in the self-contained class did not want to go with the students in the departmentalized classes. The reasons they gave for this were that they had not been with the other students during the year and that they wanted to plan their own trip. With the aid of their teacher they planned a different trip on a different day. Each student asked at least one of his parents to go along on the trip. In several instances both parents went along. Most of the fathers went. The trip went off without problems and was considered a great success.

Summary

The self-contained sixth grade classroom was set up, not as punishment, but as a place where students would have the opportunity to overcome behavior problems they were experiencing. Fourteen students were identified as possible candidates for the class. Ultimately eleven boys were selected to take part in the class. The size of the class was purposely kept small to allow the teacher time to work with each student on a personal basis and to allow

time for class discussions. The students spent an average of forty-five minutes a day talking about behavior problems they were having and how to deal with them. Additional time was spent on activities working with television programs, films, and print materials which dealt with the affective domain.

Through the discussions about behavior problems and affective activities the students talked about how they were going to deal with various situations. Field trips and special room events were developed to provide opportunities that would enable the students to put into practice those ideas they felt would help them.

From time to time there were individual discipline problems that needed a more direct approach than discussion. When they came up, techniques that were used were time out, taking away a privilege, or calling the student's parents.

Contacts were made with parents for good as well as bad behavior. The contacts were accomplished through formal conferences, quick informal conferences, phone calls, and notes.

Chapter 4

ANALYSIS OF DATA

In this study eleven sixth grade students were taught in a self-contained classroom where they received special attention in dealing with behavior problems they were having. These eleven students were matched with eleven sixth grade students selected from a three section departmentalized program in the same school.

The data gathered on each set of students were about attitude toward school, overt problem behavior at school, and academic achievement. The data on attitude toward school were collected during the second week of school and during the thirty-ninth week of school. The data on overt problem behavior at school were collected during the week prior to the opening of school for the fifth grade year, and then throughout the sixth grade year. The data on academic achievement were collected during the fifth week of school and during the thirty-seventh week of school.

The data were analyzed using two non-parametric tests. The Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test was used to look at differences between the various sets of scores. The Spearman rank-correlation coefficient test was used to determine if any correlation existed between

attitude toward school and overt problem behavior at school, and attitude toward school and academic achievement. The non-parametric statistical tests were used because it was known that the conditions for a parametric statistical test were not met. The attitude scores and the behavior scores are not equally variable and the groups were not randomly selected. Non-parametric statistical tests are well suited for small groups like those used in this study.

Table 1

School Attitude Pretest Comparison

Pair	Treatment Group Scores	Comparison Group Scores	d	Rank of d	Rank with less frequency sign
a	104	100	4	3	
b	113	121	- 8	- 7	7
c	91	111	-10	- 9	9
d	106	99	7	5.5	
e	107	101	6	4	
f	114	95	9	8	
g	103	102	1	1.5	
h	115	114	1	1.5	
i	128	77	51	11	
j	108	101	7	5.5	
k	81	121	-40	-10	10
					T=26

Critical value of T = 11 at alpha = .05

A comparison of the school attitude pretest (Table 1) using the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test yielded an obtained T of 26. The critical value of T at the alpha equals .05 for a two tailed test is 11. Since

the obtained T of 26 is not less than or equal to the critical T of 11, it can be concluded that there was no significant difference of attitude toward school between the treatment group and the comparison group before treatment.

Table 2

School Attitude Posttest Comparison

Pair	Treatment Group Scores	Comparison Group Scores	d	Rank of d	Rank with less frequency sign
a	90	99	- 9	- 1	
b	94	114	-10	- 2	
c	82	132	-50	-11	
d	86	105	-19	- 8	
e	108	94	-14	- 3	
f	121	98	-23	- 9	
g	82	97	-15	- 4.5	
h	88	116	-18	- 7	
i	75	90	-15	- 4.5	
j	100	116	-16	- 6	
k	79	125	-46	-10	
					T= 0

Critical value of T = 11 at alpha = .05

A comparison of the school attitude posttest data (Table 2) using the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test yielded an obtained T of 0. The critical value of T at the alpha equals .05 for a two tailed test is 11. Since the obtained T of 0 is less than the critical T of 11, it can be concluded that there was a significant difference of the attitude toward school between the treatment group and the comparison group after the treatment. An

examination of the scores of each group will show that the treatment group had the lower scores.

Table 3

Treatment Group School Attitude Pretest/Posttest Comparison

Pair	Pretest Score	Posttest Score	d	Rank of d	Rank with less frequency sign
a	104	90	14	6	
b	113	94	19	7	
c	91	82	9	5	
d	106	86	20	8	
e	107	108	- 1	- 1	1
f	114	121	- 7	- 3	3
g	103	82	21	9	
h	115	88	27	10	
i	128	75	53	11	
j	108	100	8	4	
k	81	79	2	2	
					T=4

Critical value of T = 11 at alpha = .05

A comparison of the school attitude pretest and posttest data of the treatment group (Table 3) using the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test yielded an obtained T of 4. The critical value of T at the alpha equals .05 for a two tailed test is 11. Since the obtained T is less than the critical T of 11, it can be concluded that there was a significant difference in the attitude toward school by the treatment group after the treatment. An examination of the pretest and posttest scores will show the posttest scores are lower than the pretest scores.

Table 4

Comparison Group School Attitude
Pretest/Posttest Comparison

Pair	Pretest Score	Posttest Score	d	Rank of d	Rank with less frequency sign
a	100	99	1	1	1
b	121	114	7	7.5	7.5
c	111	132	-21	11	
d	99	105	- 6	6	
e	101	94	7	7.5	7.5
f	95	98	- 3	3	
g	102	97	5	5	5
h	114	116	- 2	2	
i	77	90	-13	9	
j	101	116	-15	10	
k	121	125	- 4	4	
					T=21

Critical value of T = 11 at alpha = .05

A comparison of the school attitude pretest and posttest data of the comparison group (Table 4) using the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test yielded an obtained T of 21. The critical value of T at the alpha equals .05 for a two tailed test is 11. Since the obtained T of 21 is not less than or equal to the critical value of 11, it can be concluded that there was no significant difference of the attitude toward school by the comparison group.

A comparison of the school attitude gain scores data (Table 5) using the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test yielded an obtained T of 4. The critical value of T at the alpha equals .05 for a two tailed test is 11. Since the obtained T is less than the critical T of 11, it

can be concluded that there is a significant difference in growth of the attitude toward school between the treatment group and the comparison group after the treatment of the treatment group. An examination of the gain scores will show that the treatment group scores went down over the course of the year.

Table 5

School Attitude Gain Score Comparison

Pair	Treatment Group Scores	Comparison Group Scores	d	Rank of d	Rank with less frequency sign
a	14	1	13	5	
b	19	7	12	4	
c	9	-21	30	10	
d	20	- 6	26	8	
e	- 1	7	- 8	- 3	3
f	- 7	- 3	- 4	- 1	1
g	21	5	16	6	
h	27	- 2	29	9	
i	53	-13	66	11	
j	8	-15	23	7	
k	2	- 4	6	2	
					T=4

Critical value of T = 11 at alpha = .05

A comparison of the overt behavior pretest scores (Table 6) using the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test yielded an obtained T of 9. The critical value of T at the alpha equals .05 for a two tailed test is 11. Since the obtained T of 9 is less than the critical T of 11, it can be concluded that there was a significant difference in overt behavior at school between the treatment group and

the comparison group. An examination of the scores of each group will show that the treatment group had more problem behaviors.

Table 6

Overt Problem Behavior Pretest Comparison

Pair	Treatment Group Scores	Comparison Group Scores	d	Rank of d	Rank with less frequency sign
a	326	3	323	7	
b	156	6	150	4	
c	1,397	308	1,071	11	
d	740	206	534	9	
e	24	36	- 12	- 1	1
f	48	0	48	2	
g	171	12	159	5	
h	403	788	- 386	- 8	8
i	764	6	758	10	
j	540	254	286	6	
k	66	0	66	3	
					T=9

Critical value of T = 11 at alpha = .05

A comparison of the overt behavior posttest scores (Table 7) using the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test yielded an obtained T of 24. The critical value of T at the alpha equals .05 for a two tailed test is 11. Since the obtained T of 24 is not less than or equal to the critical T of 11, it can be concluded that there was no significant difference in overt behavior at school between the treatment group and the comparison group during the treatment.

Table 7

Overt Problem Behavior
Posttest Comparison

Pair	Treatment Group Scores	Comparison Group Scores	d	Rank of d	Rank with less frequency sign
a	20	0	20	4	
b	12	0	12	1.5	
c	122	1	121	11	
d	12	0	12	1.5	
e	6	50	- 44	- 7.5	7.5
f	7	24	- 17	- 3	3
g	20	64	- 44	- 7.5	7.5
h	55	4	51	9	
i	17	56	- 33	- 6	6
j	64	0	64	10	
k	24	0	24	5	
					T=24

Critical value of T = 11 at alpha = .05

Table 8

Treatment Group Overt Problem Behavior
Pretest/Posttest Comparison

Pair	Pretest Score	Posttest Score	d	Rank of d	Rank with less frequency sign
a	326	20	306	6	
b	156	12	144	4	
c	1,397	122	1,275	11	
d	740	12	728	9	
e	24	6	18	1	
f	48	7	41	2	
g	171	20	151	5	
h	403	55	348	7	
i	764	17	747	10	
j	540	64	476	8	
k	66	24	42	3	
					T=0

Critical value of T = 11 at alpha = .05

A comparison of the overt problem behavior pretest scores and the posttest scores of the treatment group (Table 8) using the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test yielded an obtained T of 0. The critical value of T at the alpha equals .05 for a two tailed test is 11. Since the obtained T of 0 is less than the critical T of 11, it can be concluded that there was a significant difference in overt problem behavior at school by the treatment group during treatment. An examination of the overt problem behavior pretest scores and the overt problem behavior posttest scores will show a smaller number of overt problem behaviors occurred during the treatment.

Table 9

Comparison Group Overt Problem Behavior
Pretest/Posttest Comparison

Pair	Pretest Score	Posttest Score	d	Rank of d	Rank with less frequency sign
a	3	0	3	1	
b	6	0	6	2	
c	308	1	307	9	
d	206	0	206	7	
e	36	50	- 14	- 3	3
f	0	24	- 24	- 4	4
g	12	64	- 52	- 6	6
h	788	4	784	10	
i	6	56	- 50	- 5	5
j	254	0	254	8	
k	0	0	0	-	
					T=18

Critical value of T = 8 at alpha = .05

A comparison of the overt behavior pretest scores and posttest scores of the comparison group (Table 9) using the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test yielded an obtained T of 18. The critical value of T at the alpha equals .05 level for a two tailed test is 8. Since the obtained T of 18 is not less than or equal to the critical T of 8, it can be concluded that there was no significant difference in overt problem behavior at school by the comparison group.

Table 10

Overt Problem Behavior Gain Scores Comparison

Pair	Treatment Group Scores	Comparison Group Scores	d	Rank of d	Rank with less frequency sign
a	306	3	303	7	
b	144	6	138	4	
c	1,275	307	968	11	
d	728	206	522	9	
e	18	- 14	32	1	
f	41	- 24	65	3	
g	151	- 52	203	5	
h	348	784	-436	- 8	8
i	747	- 50	697	10	
j	476	254	222	6	
k	42	0	42	2	
					T=8

Critical value of T = 11 at alpha = .05

A comparison of the overt behavior gain scores data (Table 10) using the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-rank test yielded an obtained T of 8. The critical value of T at the alpha equals .05 level for a two tailed test is

11. Since the obtained T of 8 is less than the critical T of 11, it can be concluded that there was a significant difference in the change of problem behaviors between the treatment group and the comparison group. An examination of the gain scores will show that all students in the treatment group had fewer problem behaviors during the treatment than before the treatment and that four students in the comparison group had more problem behaviors during the treatment than before.

Table 11

Achievement Pretest Comparison

Pair	Treatment Group Scores	Comparison Group Scores	d	Rank of d	Rank with less frequency sign
a	103	93	10	9.5	
b	122	114	8	6	
c	109	103	6	4.5	
d	103	112	- 9	- 7.5	7.5
e	107	93	14	11	
f	101	111	-10	- 9.5	9.5
g	101	98	3	2	
h	98	107	- 9	- 7.5	7.5
i	107	103	4	3	
j	95	101	- 6	- 4.5	4.5
k	118	116	2	1	
					T=29

Critical value of T = 11 at alpha = .05

A comparison of the academic achievement posttest (Table 11) using the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test yielded an obtained T of 29. The critical value of T at the alpha equals .05 level for a two tailed test is 11.

Since the obtained T of 29 is not less than or equal to the critical T of 11, it can be concluded that there was no significant difference between the treatment group and the comparison group before treatment of the comparison group in their academic achievement.

Table 12

Achievement Posttest Comparison

Pair	Treatment Group Scores	Comparison Group Scores	d	Rank of d	Rank with less frequency sign
a	104	90	14	10	
b	128	120	8	7	
c	107	113	- 6	- 5	5
d	108	111	- 3	- 2.5	2.5
e	103	95	8	7	
f	110	114	- 4	- 4	4
g	103	100	3	2.5	
h	104	122	-18	-11	11
i	110	108	2	1	
j	97	106	- 9	- 9	9
k	126	118	8	7	
					T=31.5

Critical value of T = 11 at alpha = .05

A comparison of the academic achievement posttest (Table 12) using the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test yielded an obtained T of 31.5. The critical value of T at the alpha equals .05 level for a two tailed test is 11. Since the obtained T of 31.5 is not less than or equal to the critical T of 11, it can be concluded that there was no significant difference in the academic achievement between

the treatment group and the comparison group after treatment.

Table 13

Treatment Group Achievement Pretest/ Posttest Comparison

Pair	Pretest Score	Posttest Score	d	Rank of d	Rank with less frequency sign
a	103	104	- 1	- 1	
b	122	128	- 6	- 8.5	
c	109	107	2	3	3
d	103	108	- 5	- 7	
e	107	103	4	6	6
f	101	110	- 9	-11	
g	101	103	- 2	- 3	
h	98	104	- 6	- 8.5	
i	107	110	- 3	- 5	
j	95	97	- 2	- 3	
k	118	126	- 8	-10	
					T=9

Critical value of T = 11 at alpha = .05

A comparison of the academic achievement pretest and posttest data for the treatment group (Table 13) using the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks yielded an obtained T of 9. The critical value of T at the alpha equals .05 level for a two tailed test is 11. Since the obtained T is less than the critical T of 11, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference of academic achievement by the treatment group after treatment. An examination of the data show the posttest scores to be higher than the pretest scores.

Table 14

Comparison Group Achievement Pretest/ Posttest Comparison

Pair	Pretest Score	Posttest Score	d	Rank of d	Rank with less frequency sign
a	93	90	3	5.5	5.5
b	114	120	- 6	- 9	
c	103	113	-10	-10	
d	112	111	1	1	1
e	93	95	- 2	- 3	
f	111	114	- 3	- 5.5	
g	98	100	- 2	- 3	
h	107	122	-15	-11	
i	103	108	- 5	- 7.5	
j	101	106	- 5	- 7.5	
k	116	118	- 2	- 3	
					T=6.5

Critical value of T = 11 at alpha = .05

A comparison of the academic achievement pretest and posttest data of the comparison group (Table 14) using the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test yielded an obtained T of 6.5. The critical value of T at the alpha equals .05 level for a two tailed test is 11. Since the obtained T is less than the critical T of 11, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference of the academic achievement by the comparison group after their sixth grade year with no special treatment. An examination of the data show the posttest scores to be higher than the pretest scores.

Table 15

Achievement Gain Score Comparison

Pair	Treatment Group Scores	Comparison Group Scores	d	Rank of d	Rank with less frequency sign
a	- 1	3	- 4	-3	3
b	- 6	- 6	0	-	
c	2	-10	12	9	
d	- 5	1	- 6	-5.5	5.5
e	4	- 2	6	5.5	
f	- 9	- 3	- 6	-5.5	5.5
g	- 2	- 2	0	-	
h	- 6	-15	9	8	
i	- 3	- 5	2	1	
j	- 2	- 5	3	2	
k	- 8	- 2	- 6	-5.5	5.5
					T=19.5

Critical value of T = 6 at alpha = .05

A comparison of the academic achievement gain scores data (Table 15) using the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test yielded an obtained T of 19.5. The critical value of T at the alpha equal .05 level for a two tailed test is 6. Since the obtained T is larger than the critical T of 6, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference in the growth in academic achievement between the treatment group and the comparison group after treatment.

A comparison of the academic achievement gain scores and the attitude toward school gain scores for the treatment group (Table 16) using the Spearman rank-correlation coefficient test yielded an r_s of .0045455 which was

converted to a t score of .0136366. The critical value of t at the alpha equals .05 level for a two tailed test is 2.262. The t score is not significant at the alpha equals .05 level for a two tailed test.

Table 16

Treatment Group Gain Score Correlation

Student	Rank		d_i	d_i^2
	Achievement	Attitude		
a	9	6	3	9
b	3.5	7	-3.5	12.25
c	10	5	5	25
d	5	8	-3	9
e	11	2	9	81
f	1	1	0	0
g	7.5	9	-1.5	2.25
h	3.5	10	-6.5	42.25
i	6	11	-5	25
j	7.5	4	3.5	12.25
k	2	3	-1	1
				219

A comparison of the academic achievement gain scores and the attitude toward school gain scores for the comparison group (Table 17) using the Spearman rank-correlation coefficient test yielded an r_s of .1889481 which was converted to a t score of .577242. The critical value of t at the alpha equals .05 level for a two tailed test is 2.262. The t score is not significant at the alpha equals .05 level for a two tailed test.

Table 17

Comparison Group Gain Score Correlation

Student	Rank		d_i	d_i^2
	Achievement	Attitude		
a	11	8	3	9
b	3	10.5	-7.5	56.25
c	2	1	1	1
d	10	4	6	36
e	7	10.5	-3.5	12.25
f	9	6	3	9
g	7	9	-2	4
h	1	7	-6	36
i	4.5	3	1.5	2.25
j	4.5	2	2.5	6.25
k	7	5	2	4
				176

Table 18

Treatment Group Gain Score Correlation

Student	Rank		d_i	d_i^2
	Behavior	Attitude		
a	6	6	0	0
b	4	7	-3	9
c	11	5	6	36
d	9	8	1	1
e	1	2	-1	1
f	2	1	1	1
g	5	9	-4	16
h	7	10	3	9
i	10	11	1	1
j	8	4	4	16
k	3	3	0	0
				90

A comparison of the overt behavior gain scores and the attitude toward school gain scores for the treatment group (Table 18) using the Spearman rank-correlation coefficient test yielded an r_s of .590909 which was converted to a t score of 2.1974004. The critical value of t at the alpha equals .05 level for a two tailed test os 2.262. The t score is not significant at the alpha equals .05 level for a two tailed test.

Table 19

Comparison Group Gain Score Correlation

	Rank			
Student	Behavior	Attitude	d_i	d_i^2
a	6	8	-2	4
b	7	10.5	-3.5	12.25
c	10	1	9	81
d	8	4	4	16
e	4	10.5	-6.5	42.25
f	3	6	-3	9
g	1	9	-8	64
h	11	7	4	16
i	2	3	-1	1
j	9	2	7	49
k	5	5	0	0
				294.5

A comparison of the overt behavior gain scores and the attitude toward school gain scores for the comparison group (Table 19) using the Spearman rank-correlation coefficient test yielded an r_s of .3416865 which was converted to a t score of 1.0907045. The critical value of t at the alpha equals .05 level for a two tailed test is 2.262.

The t score is not significant at the alpha equals .05 level for a two tailed test.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

This study was designed to provide a small self-contained classroom setting for sixth grade students with behavior problems to determine if daily discussion of those problems together with related activities would bring about a change in attitude toward school with a concomitant change in academic achievement.

Eleven students were selected from four sections of fifth grade to make up the treatment group. They were identified by the fifth grade teachers based upon fifteen behavior criteria. Students for a comparison group were selected using the matched pairs method. The criteria for their selection were sex, age, grade, attendance center, and Iowa Test of Basic Skills scores. The comparison group students were members of three larger departmentalized classrooms during their sixth grade year.

The treatment group class size allowed the teacher to work with individual students and provide time for class discussions. The students spent an average of forty-five minutes a day talking about behavior problems they were having and how to deal with them. Additional time was

spent on activities working with television programs, films, and print material which dealt with the affective domain.

During the discussions about behavior problems and affective activities the students talked about how they were going to deal with various situations. Field trips and special room events were developed to provide opportunities that would enable the students to put into practice those ideas they felt would help them.

From time to time there were individual discipline problems that needed more than discussion. When they came up techniques that were used were: time out, taking away a privilege or calling the student's parents.

The students in the treatment group and the comparison group were given the School Attitude Test and the Peabody Individual Achievement Test in September and again in May. A record was obtained of the overt problem behavior of the students in the treatment group and the comparison group during their fifth grade year and a record was kept of their overt problem behavior during the sixth grade year. The Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test was used to evaluate the differences between the various sets of scores. The Spearman rank-correlation coefficient test was used to determine if any correlation existed between attitude toward school and overt problem behavior at school, and attitude toward school and academic achievement.

In September, the treatment group and the comparison group did not differ significantly in attitude toward school or in academic achievement. However, there was a significant difference between them in overt problem behavior during their fifth grade year. In an examination of the overt problem behavior scores, the treatment group showed more problem behaviors. This was due to the selection method.

In May, the treatment group and the comparison group did not differ significantly in academic achievement or in overt problem behavior, however, there was a significant difference between them in attitude toward school. In an examination of the attitude toward school scores, the treatment group showed a lower score in attitude toward school.

In an examination of pretest scores and posttest scores, each group showed significant growth in academic achievement, the treatment group showed significant positive growth in reducing overt problem behavior, the comparison group showed no significant change in overt problem behavior, the experimental group showed significant negative growth in attitude toward school and the comparison group showed no significant growth in attitude toward school.

When gain scores were used, there was no significant difference between the treatment group and the comparison group in academic achievement, however, there was a significant difference between the two groups in overt

problem behavior at school, and in attitude toward school. It makes no difference how the scores were compared to show that both groups grew similarly in academic achievement, that the treatment group made greater positive improvement in overt problem behavior at school than did the comparison group, and that the treatment group had a greater negative growth in attitude toward school than did the comparison group.

A comparison of the academic achievement gain scores and the attitude toward school gain scores showed that there was no significant correlation between them for either the comparison group or the treatment group. A comparison of the overt problem behavior at school gain scores and the attitude toward school gain scores showed that there was no significant correlation between them for either the comparison group or the treatment group.

Conclusions

There is no apparent advantage in working on attitude toward school for academic achievement. The results of this study showed that while the treatment group and the comparison group each had significant growth from September to May, there was no significant difference between the pretest scores of the comparison group and the treatment group in September or the posttest scores in May. There was no significant difference between the

treatment group and the comparison group in their academic achievement test gain scores.

There is no apparent advantage in working on attitude toward school for improving overt problem behavior at school. The results of this study showed that while there was a significant positive growth in overt problem behavior at school for the treatment group and no significant growth in overt problem behavior at school for the comparison group, there was a significant negative growth in attitude toward school for the treatment group and no significant growth in attitude for the comparison group. The significant growth in opposite directions for the treatment group of attitude toward school and overt behavior at school would suggest a different relationship than would be expected.

There is no apparent advantage in working on attitude toward school for improving attitudes toward school. The results of this study showed that there was no significant difference between the treatment group and the comparison group on the pretest in September, however, there was a significant negative difference on the posttest in May. The treatment group showed significant negative growth. There was a significant negative difference between the treatment group and the comparison group attitude toward school test gain scores.

This study supports the findings of those researchers who claim that there is no apparent relationship between

attitude and behavior, and attitude toward school and academic achievement. The results of this study showed that when the overt problem behavior gain scores and the attitude toward school gain scores for both the treatment group and the comparison group were correlated there was no significant difference. The results also showed that when the academic achievement gain scores and the attitude toward school gain scores for both the treatment group and the comparison group were correlated there was no significant difference.

Discussion

In the discussions before the study started, parents of students in the treatment group expressed the concern that the formation of a class of eleven students who had problem behaviors might create a situation where the students would develop still more problem behaviors. The results of the overt problem behavior records would suggest that this did not happen. There was a significant reduction in the incidence of overt problem behaviors in the treatment group during the treatment. There are three reasons which may explain why the reduction of problem behaviors took place. First, there were about nine students less in the treatment group than there were in each of the fifth grade classrooms the year before when the pretreatment scores were collected. This would enable each student to have more access to the teacher, thus possibly taking

care of situations before they became problems. Second, the teacher of the treatment group may not have viewed a behavior as a problem which the teacher collecting the pre-treatment scores would have considered a problem. This could have happened because of a basic difference in the definition of what constituted a problem or a behavior which was a problem in a class of twenty was not a problem in a class of eleven. Finally, the reduction of problem behavior may have happened because time had been provided to talk about the situations which caused problem behaviors to develop and to try to change attitudes toward those situations. The students had said they needed time to talk about their problems.

During class discussions the students in the treatment group were able to talk about how they were going to interact with adults and other students, but often they were not able to follow through in the real situation. As one might expect from the brain research cited earlier they downshifted to older more familiar ways. It seemed that these students needed a great deal of class discussion and situations where they could practice solutions for a variety of problems. An example, cited in Chapter 3, where the treatment group students invited students they were having problems with, to talk. The treatment group students talked at length about how they were going to handle the visit, however, when faced with the stress of having the students in the same room they downshifted to a behavior they knew well.

The antidote suggested for downshifting is confidence. The comment that the treatment group student made to the visitors, "We got you in here to show you we're not stupid, we're normal," did not show confidence. It was a statement typical of students in the treatment group. All of the treatment group students referred to the self-contained room as a jail and to themselves as dumb. They were not building confidence nor were they developing a positive attitude toward school. In the posttest of attitude toward school, the treatment group differed significantly from its own pretest, and the comparison group posttest. The negative growth in attitude toward school of the treatment group in this study suggests that putting students who have overt problem behaviors at school in a class by themselves may cause them to develop negative attitudes toward school. It could also suggest that the correct methods and materials were not used with this group to bring about a positive change in attitude toward school.

A major concern of the principal and teacher of the treatment group was that the segregating of students with overt behavior problems into a self-contained classroom and/or the activities used with those students might cause them to turn off to school and cease learning. Whatever else happened to the students in the treatment group, they did not stop learning. There was a significant difference between their September and May academic achievement scores. The students in the treatment group learned as well as their

counterparts in the comparison group. There was no significant difference in the academic achievement gain scores between the treatment group and the comparison group.

Recommendations and Implications

On the basis of the data in this study, it would appear that there is no advantage in trying to change student's attitude toward school to bring about a positive change in overt problem behavior and improve academic achievement.

If similar studies were to be done in the future, these recommendations are suggested:

1. An objective criterion check list needs to be developed and applied to an entire population in the year prior to the study for the purpose of identifying a treatment group and a comparison group. The fifth grade classroom teachers in this study identified students for the self-contained classroom based on their memory of events during the school year. Their memory may not have been accurate and may have been biased. All students in the treatment group were deemed to have had a significantly greater number of overt problem behaviors than those students in the comparison group. This may not have been true.

2. The students in the comparison group and the students in the treatment group should be in the same type of classroom. During this study, the students were taught using two different types of classroom organizations, a

self-contained classroom and departmentalized classrooms. The difference between these two classroom organizations may have introduced factors other than those being tested for into the results.

3. The students in the comparison group and the students in the treatment group should be taught by the same teacher or teachers trained to use the same methods and materials in the same way. During this study, the students were taught by three departmental classroom teachers and one self-contained classroom teacher who had not had any training to insure that the methods and materials they used were used in the same way. The differences that may have taken place, may have introduced factors other than those being tested for into the results.

4. The students in the comparison group and the students in the treatment group should all be students who have overt problem behaviors. In this study the students in the treatment group were deemed to have overt problem behaviors and the students in the comparison group were deemed not to have overt problem behaviors. This made the comparison of the two groups difficult.

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APPENDIX A

Form Used by Fifth Grade Teachers in August

Student Name _____

I am looking at behavior patterns of children in elementary school.

Place a check in the box next to each statement which most nearly tells how frequently each behavior and punishment happened last school year (1978-79) with the child named above. The boxes are as follows:

1 Daily
2 Weekly
3 Biweekly
4 Monthly
5 Two to three times during the year
6 Not at all

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Came to school late						
2. Refused to take part in class activity						
3. Refused to complete assignment						
4. Refused to do work when given time in class						
5. Moved about classroom without rationale						
6. Disrupted class activity						
7. Disrupted study time						
8. Was argumentative about petty things						
9. Talked back to the teacher						
10. Fought in the hall						
11. Fought in the classroom						
12. Was sent in from playground for fighting						
13. Was sent in from playground for talking back to playground aide						
14. Was sent out of classroom as a form of discipline						
15. Was sent to the principal as a form of discipline						

APPENDIX B

Form Used by Sixth Grade Teachers Throughout the Year

Student Name _____ Quarter _____

I am looking at behavior patterns of children in elementary school.

Place a tick next to each statement which most nearly describes each behavior and punishment each time it happens with the child named above.

You will get a new sheet for each child each quarter.

1. Came to school late	
2. Refused to take part in class activity	
3. Refused to complete assignment	
4. Refused to do work when given time in class	
5. Moved about classroom without rationale	
6. Disrupted class activity	
7. Disrupted study time	
8. Was argumentative about petty things	
9. Talked back to the teacher	
10. Fought in the hall	
11. Fought in the classroom	
12. Was sent in from playground for fighting	
13. Was sent in from playground for talking back to playground aide	
14. Was sent out of classroom as a form of discipline	
15. Was sent to the principal as a form of discipline	